

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A shopping cart braking device for use with an existing  
5 shopping cart, by a user having at least one foot, for  
selectively immobilizing the shopping cart upon a support  
surface, said shopping cart having a handle for maneuvering  
the cart, a basket for holding various items, a chassis  
having an internally oriented surface, an externally oriented  
10 surface, a first lateral side, a second lateral side, and a  
front crossbar extending between the first lateral side and  
the second lateral side, said chassis further having an  
underside having at least two front wheel assemblies and at  
least two rear wheel assemblies attached thereunto, said  
15 wheel assemblies each having a selectively rotatable wheel,  
said braking device comprising a tube having a first end and  
a second end, each of said ends of the tube having a hinge  
upon which the braking device selectively swivels upon the  
chassis, said tube selectively hingeably attached, in  
20 proximity to its first end and its second end, to the first  
lateral side and the second lateral side of the chassis of  
the shopping cart, in proximity to the front crossbar and the  
front wheel assemblies of the cart, said tube having two  
substantially parallel portions separated by a central  
25 connecting portion, said braking device having a brake pad  
for selectively preventing the front wheels from rotating,  
said connecting portion extending concentrically through the

brake pad, said braking device having an unbraked position wherein the connecting portion of the tube has been elevated with respect to the support surface with the at least one foot of the user, in order that the brake pad does not impede  
5 the rotation of the front wheels of the shopping cart, said braking device also having a braked position wherein the connecting portion of the tube has been lowered with respect to the support surface with the foot of the user, in order to selectively wedge the brake pad between the front wheels and  
10 the support surface, thereby preventing the front wheels of the shopping cart from rotating, and thereby immobilizing the shopping cart.

2. The shopping cart braking device as recited in claim 1,  
15 wherein the tube is substantially U-shaped.

3. The shopping cart braking device as recited in claim 2, wherein the braking device is attached, in proximity to the first end and the second end of the braking device, to the  
20 externally oriented surfaces of the first lateral side and the second lateral side of the chassis of the shopping cart.

4. The shopping cart braking device as recited in claim 2, wherein the braking device is attached, in proximity to the  
25 first end and the second end of the braking device, to the internally oriented surfaces of the first lateral side and the second lateral side of the chassis of the shopping cart.

5. A shopping cart braking device for use with an existing shopping cart, by a user having at least one foot, for selectively immobilizing the shopping cart upon a support surface, said shopping cart having a handle for maneuvering the cart, a basket for holding various items, a chassis having an internally oriented surface, an externally oriented surface, a first lateral side, a second lateral side, said chassis further having an underside having at least two front wheel assemblies and at least two rear wheel assemblies attached thereunto, said wheel assemblies each having a selectively rotatable wheel, said braking device comprising a tube having a first end and a second end, each of said ends of the tube having a hinge upon which the braking device selectively swivels upon the chassis, said tube selectively hingeably attached, in proximity to its first end and its second end, to the first lateral side and the second lateral side of the chassis of the shopping cart, in proximity to the rear wheel assemblies of the cart, said tube having two substantially parallel portions separated by a central connecting portion, said braking device having a brake pad for selectively preventing the rear wheels from rotating, said connecting portion extending concentrically through the brake pad, said braking device having an unbraked position wherein the connecting portion of the tube has been elevated with respect to the support surface with the at least one foot of the user, in order that the brake pad does not impede

the rotation of the rear wheels of the shopping cart, said  
braking device also having a braked position wherein the  
connecting portion of the tube has been lowered with respect  
to the support surface with the foot of the user, in order to  
5 selectively wedge the brake pad between the rear wheels and  
the support surface, thereby preventing the rear wheels of  
the shopping cart from rotating, and thereby immobilizing the  
shopping cart.

10 6. A method of using a shopping cart braking device by a user  
having at least one foot, in conjunction with an existing  
shopping cart, for selectively immobilizing the shopping cart  
upon a support surface, said shopping cart having a handle  
for maneuvering the cart, a basket for holding a variety of  
15 items, an underlying tubular chassis having an internally  
oriented surface, an externally oriented surface, a first  
lateral side, a second lateral side, and a front crossbar  
extending between said first lateral side and second lateral  
side, said chassis having an underside having at least two  
20 front wheel assemblies and at least two rear wheel assemblies  
attached thereunto, each of said wheel assemblies having a  
rotatable wheel, said braking device having a tube having a  
first end and a second end, each of said ends of the tube  
having a hinge, said tube having two substantially parallel  
25 portions separated by a central connecting portion, said  
connecting portion having a brake pad, said braking device

having an unbraked position and a braked position, said method comprising the steps of:

5           a) attaching the hinges of the shopping cart braking device to the first lateral side and the second lateral side of the chassis of the shopping cart, in proximity to the front crossbar and the front wheel assemblies of the existing shopping cart;

10           b) converting the braking device to the unbraked position by elevating the connecting portion of the tube with respect to the support surface by swiveling the braking device upward upon its hinges with the at least one foot of the user, thereby permitting rotation of the front wheels of  
15 the shopping cart and motion of the shopping cart; and

          c) converting the braking device to the braked position by lowering the connecting portion of the tube with respect to the support surface by swiveling the braking  
20 device downward upon its hinges with the at least one foot of the user, and by selectively wedging the brake pad between the front wheels and the support surface upon which the shopping cart rests, thereby preventing the front wheels from rotating, and thereby immobilizing the shopping cart.

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